

# UNIVERSAL ACCESS CAMPAIGNER'S UPDATE



Universal Access Campaigner's update is a quarterly campaigner's newsletter on AIDS campaigning around the world.

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## 2007 AIDS Epidemic Update Released

### New AIDS figures call for strengthened efforts towards universal access

by Molly Lepeska

Each year prior to World AIDS Day, the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS releases an extensive report on HIV and AIDS prevalence rates worldwide. This is the main source of statistics for all AIDS Campaigning organisations and forms the basis for funding and campaigning at the national, regional and international levels.

The 2007 report released data indicating a significant reduction in AIDS related deaths and HIV infection rates. These latest figures are a result of improved data collection, new methodological mechanisms as well as actual reductions in infection rates. They indicate signs of hope that the spread of HIV can be stopped, however, the need to act on promises that have been made in responding to HIV and AIDS remains as urgent as ever.

As the latest report indicates, over 6800 people are still being infected every day with HIV, about 1200 of whom are children under 15. The infection rates in young people aged 15-24 remain frighteningly high and AIDS remains the leading cause of mortality in sub-Saharan Africa. Statistics only go so far in showing the extent of an epidemic, and this is particularly true with HIV. While resources for information services, health care, medicines, and support services fall far short of need, where stigma and discrimination exist, and when gender inequality, violence, and poverty deny access for people to accurate information, prevention, testing, counselling and treatment, HIV will continue to spread.

We know these infections and deaths are preventable and avoidable if promises by countries to scale up access to prevention, treatment, care and support for all are to be fulfilled by 2010.

At its essence, the epidemic is about people, not numbers. Rates of infection and deaths – even in their millions – do not begin to reveal the true toll of AIDS on families and friends, on communities, on people already at the margins of society and on youth and women in particular.

We have seen countries and people grow complacent when statistics show rates of infection declining only to have the numbers increase. We cannot afford to pause in our response.

Civil society organisations and all those infected and affected by HIV should remain committed to address all aspects that fuel the spread of the epidemic and prevent universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support. Governments must still be held accountable for the promises they have made and not rest on their laurels or lose sight of the millions still at risk. To read the report go to [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org).



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# WORLD AIDS DAY AROUND THE WORLD



Some of the events featured on [www.worldaidscampaign.org](http://www.worldaidscampaign.org) (l-r): Poster for Wake Up Pune! World AIDS Day Campaign, Pune, India; AIDS Walk in Singapore featuring the Senior Minister of State, Dr Balaji Sadasivan; "Barog, Bukidnon! Battle of the Bands and Leadership Pledge" Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, Philippines; NJCRI and NJ Stop AIDS Coalitions' 2nd Annual World AIDS Day Extravaganza Newark, USA

This World AIDS Day, campaigners around the world are taking the lead to stop AIDS by planning unique events, activities and initiatives which help keep AIDS at the forefront of the media and public agenda on December 1st. From positive networks to student groups, faith based organisations to the United Nations, campaigners are mobilising around the international theme of leadership, using leadership as a starting point to create their own campaigns within a local, national or regional context.

Just a few of the events are highlighted here. To find out more, please visit the World AIDS Campaign's International Events Calendar - [http://www.worldaidscampaign.info/static/en/wac/world\\_aids\\_day\\_\\_1/wad\\_2007\\_events\\_calendar/](http://www.worldaidscampaign.info/static/en/wac/world_aids_day__1/wad_2007_events_calendar/)

## Burundi

On World AIDS Day, members for the Global Youth Coalition on AIDS (GYCA) in Burundi will come together to pose critical questions about the challenges and opportunities young leaders and youth organisations face in their efforts toward achieving the MDG's. The workshop, taking place in the Buterere Community, will focus on the strategies of environmental activism, authentic leadership challenges, the leadership team, networking strategies towards development, management practice, principle and approaches and community education.

## Cape Town

On World AIDS Day, the Anglican organisation Fikelela, is coordinating the "Walk for Witness." The purpose of the day long event, which is kicked off by a walk attended by many churches and individuals, is to challenge churches to take the lead in their communities with the message of stopping discrimination against people living with HIV. The walk will begin at 11 am and end up at the Turfhall Stadium, where the event will include a speech by Cape Town Mayor Helen Zille, performances by dance troupes and DJs, food and much more.



"Walk for Witness" T shirt

For more information visit [www.fikelela.org.za](http://www.fikelela.org.za)

## New York

On 30th November, the United Nations, The Hunger Project, St. Bartholomew's Church, Gay Men's Health Crisis, Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria are hosting a Night of Remembrance to



The 2006 New York event drew over 400 attendees including Lynn Murchison, Peter Piot, Joan Holmes and Mrs. and Mr. Annan. credit:[www.aidsdaynyc.org](http://www.aidsdaynyc.org)

honour those who have been affected by AIDS. Leaders from many walks of life, including the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, US Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, and CNN Commentator Soledad O'Brien, will join AIDS advocates, health service providers, people living with HIV and celebrities for an evening of celebration and remembrance at Saint Bartholomew's Church in Manhattan.

For more information visit [www.aidsdaynyc.org](http://www.aidsdaynyc.org)

## Ukraine

To commemorate World AIDS Day, the All-Ukrainian Network of people living with HIV is launching a fundraising initiative called "Let your heart beat." This initiative encourages people to take the lead by donating their salary on World AIDS Day to the national emergency fund of the All-Ukrainian Network of PLWH. The funds will go to aid those in need with medication, doctor visits, surgery and funeral costs.

## Virtual

TakingITGlobal is hosting a World AIDS Day Live Chat online on 29th November. A "live chat" is a way for youth to connect and discuss important issues with people from around the world "face to face" via webcam. All that is needed to join the World AIDS Day discussion is a headset! The theme for the live chat is 'Keeping the Promise to Youth' where our speakers will be discussing: What promises have been made to youth affected by HIV/AIDS? Have these promises been delivered on? And what else needs to be done? Speakers include Sydney Hushie (Project Officer for the Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Ghana) and Ricardo Baruch (Youth Coordinator for the International AIDS Conference 2008), and guest moderator Caitlin Chandler, Project Officer from the Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS, New York.

For more information, please visit [www.takingitglobal.org](http://www.takingitglobal.org).

## World AIDS Day - Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia

For the first time, the World AIDS Campaign will be supporting local World AIDS Day events in Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia. The national activities, ranging from petition presentations to a truck procession, will highlight the World AIDS Day theme of leadership and universal access. Featured in this Campaigner's Update are details about the World AIDS Day events being planned in Kenya during the week building up to World AIDS Day. In our next Campaigner's Update, we will feature the events that happened in Zambia and Nigeria.

In Kenya, World AIDS Day precedes the Presidential elections by 2 weeks. A poster has been developed and distributed, targeting the general public, but particularly aspirant politicians, with the message: "Take the Lead: Universal Access to HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support demands committed leadership. Leadership begins with you and me."

On 30th November 2007, the campaigners will have a truck procession to all political party head quarters in Nairobi.

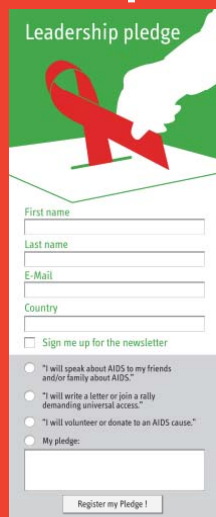
During this election period, party leadership will be asked to offer their commitments towards achieving the country's universal access targets. Parties and aspiring civic and parliamentary leaders will be urged to take the lead to ensure that every Kenyan has universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support. At the same time, the electorate will be informed on the need to elect responsible leaders committed towards the achievement of universal access.

In support of national scale up of HIV testing and counselling activities in Nairobi, Coast and Nyanza provinces, Kenyan campaigners will hold community mobilisation processions on 28th and 29th of November 2007 targeting different groups. One procession will target university students and youth to encourage HIV testing, another road show, which will encourage the general public to undergo Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT), will take place in Nairobi's suburbs of Kibera, Dagorett, Kawangware, Uthiru and Kangemi.



Marching band joins a truck procession. The band is made up of children of truck drivers who have passed away. Credit: Kenya Long Distance Truck Drivers Association

# Stop AIDS Leadership Pledge

A graphic for the Stop AIDS Leadership Pledge form. It features a red ribbon symbol and a hand holding a pen. Below the graphic are input fields for 'First name', 'Last name', 'E-Mail', and 'Country'. There is a checkbox for 'Sign me up for the newsletter' and three radio button options: 'I will speak about AIDS to my friends and/or family about AIDS', 'I will write a letter or join a rally demanding universal access.', and 'I will volunteer or donate to an AIDS cause.'. A 'My pledge:' text area is followed by a 'Register my Pledge!' button.

Leadership pledge

First name

Last name

E-Mail

Country

Sign me up for the newsletter

"I will speak about AIDS to my friends and/or family about AIDS."

"I will write a letter or join a rally demanding universal access."

"I will volunteer or donate to an AIDS cause."

My pledge:

Register my Pledge!

From Myanmar to Venezuela, Iran to Bulgaria and Canada to Zimbabwe people representing countries on every continent have now pledged their leadership to stop AIDS. In collaboration with national, regional, global and constituent partners, World AIDS Campaign launched the Stop AIDS Leadership Pledge, a year-long initiative which asks people from all over the world to pledge their leadership to help stop AIDS. With a goal of at least 100,000 signees by World AIDS Day 2008, these pledges will serve as a persuasive tool for leveraging greater leadership on universal access to AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and act as a visual example for key national and international decision-makers to follow. The pledge will be promoted at global events throughout the year, including the upcoming Inter Parliamentary Unions Meeting at the end of November.

Join the over 800 people from 79 countries who have already pledged their leadership to Stop AIDS. Please visit [www.worldaidscampaign.org](http://www.worldaidscampaign.org) to make your pledge. Encourage others to do the same by downloading the pledge form in 8 languages or adding the Stop AIDS Leadership Pledge button to your website.

## G8 Update

### Civil G8 Meet to Discuss 2008 G8 Summit

Between 19 -21 November, members of the Civil G8 Group gathered at a meeting in Geneva co-convoked by World AIDS Campaign and UNAIDS to begin planning for the 2008 G8 Summit. The meeting was attended by civil society representatives from all G8 countries, members of African civil society, the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance representing faith groups, the Global Unions HIV/AIDS Programmes representing labour groups, UNAIDS and the Global Fund.

The main purpose of the meeting was to follow up on the 2007 G8 commitments made in Germany and to discuss next steps for the 2008 G8. Presentations were made by UNAIDS and the Global Fund regarding their perspectives on the 2007 G8 outcomes, and Birte Hageboelling, Action Against AIDS Germany, discussed lessons learned in 2007 from the German perspective, while Masaki Inada, African Japan Forum, gave an overview of the new Japanese leadership.

Based on the presentations and discussions, the group began to craft a plan of action for the G8 2008. The first action for the group will be to ensure that HIV/AIDS remains on the G8 agenda, and that the Japanese leadership continues to follow up on the 2007 commitments. To do this, group members will continue to push a clear and concise message to G8 leaders about universal access and its implementation. In addition, civil society organisations must demand that commitments be kept for all aspects of universal access prevention, treatment, care and support, and prevention's importance not be forgotten.

In addition, the group advocated for AIDS communities to continue to support Health Systems strengthening, in order to refute any false ideas that AIDS communities do not support this.

### Japan Announces Intention to Place Global Health at the Centre of G8 Summit

During the Women Deliver Conference in London 18 - 20 October 2007, which brought together 2000 participants from 109 countries; Mr. Takaoka, a high official at the United Kingdom Japanese Embassy, announced Japan's intention to place global health at the centre of the 2008 G8 Summit. Mr. Takaoka stated, "Japan is determined to shed new light on global health. It is time to renew our firm resolution to achieve the health-related MDGs. In this context TICAD IV, scheduled for May 2008 in Yokohama, and the G8 Summit in Toyako, Hokkaido in July 2008, together with the process leading up to these two major events, will be an excellent opportunity for presenting a comprehensive vision of global health based on the concept of Human Security. As an initial step, Japan is planning to issue a high-level policy statement in the coming months."

# OTHER ORGANISATIONAL NEWS

## Sub-Regional Campaigners meeting in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa

World AIDS Campaign, in collaboration with the African Civil Society Coalition on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria recently concluded a series of sub-regional campaigners meetings in Southern, Eastern and Western Africa. Each meeting brought together over 30 participants from various constituencies from neighbouring countries in the sub-region with the aim of exploring how civil society can campaign nationally and regionally to hold their leaders to account on AIDS commitments.

The meetings were an important opportunity to begin mapping existing civil society campaigning and mobilisation actions in the region, particularly for World AIDS day, and facilitated the sharing of skills and lessons amongst the participants. In addition, they allowed for strategising on key mobilisation moments and activities in the coming year to orchestrate national level activities that push for accountability on universal access.

Although the content of the meetings differed from region to region, an important conclusion drawn, common to all, was the need for civil society to operate in a coordinated manner to achieve its goals and ensure that promises are being kept. In addition, civil society groups agreed that it is impossible to hold decision makers accountable, if civil society groups are not aware of the various commitments made to AIDS. The participants of the meetings agreed that in order to demand accountability, they needed to be exemplary of good governance, transparency and accountability to their constituencies.

The meeting reports documenting the proceedings and highlighting key conclusions will be made available at: [www.worldaidscampaign.org](http://www.worldaidscampaign.org)

## "15% Now" Campaign Issues TB Scorecard

Africa Public Health Rights Alliance "15% Now" Campaign issued a TB Scorecard at the start of the World Conference Against TB, Lung Disease [and HIV] held in Cape Town 8 – 12 November. Among other things, the scorecard revealed that all 10 countries globally with the highest prevalence per 100,000 in HIV positive adults are African, with Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, DRC and South Africa carry biggest burden and that poor health financing and falling levels of health workers are key factors driving TB prevalence.

In a statement, Rotimi Sankore, Coordinator of the

Africa Public Health Rights Alliance 15% Now Campaign stated that, "In August 2005 African Health Ministers rightly declared rising TB prevalence an emergency but governments and Heads of State in particular have largely failed to act. Due to the abysmally low levels of health financing millions of Africans are unable to receive treatment, and demoralised health workers are being poached in thousands by more developed countries taking advantage of the situation."

In addition, he urged that, "with the World Health Organisation warning that TB could be spreading in many areas at the rate of one person per second, and each infected person capable of infecting another 10 to 15 persons per annum, Africa's future will be very gloomy unless our Heads of States start putting down the money immediately to strengthen African Health Systems through, in the first instance, all meeting the Abuja pledge to allocate 15% or more of national budgets to health care."

For more information on the scorecard of the 15% Campaign, please visit [www.africa15percentcampaign.org](http://www.africa15percentcampaign.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| 28-30 November            | 1st Global Parliamentary Meeting on HIV/AIDS, Manila |
| 1 December                | WORLD AIDS DAY                                       |
| 25 November - 10 December | 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence          |
| 23-27 January             | World Economic Forum, Davos                          |
| 16 February               | Global Health Summit, Japan                          |
| 8 March                   | International Women's Day                            |

## IGWG

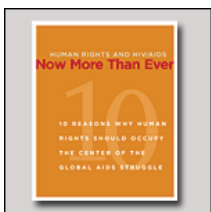
Negotiations between representatives of Ministries of Health lead by the World Health Organisation to ensure new medical products are developed and existing ones are made affordable were suspended after delegates ran out of time. The goal of the second round negotiations, held through the Intergovernmental Working Group for Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property (IGWG) in early November, was to create a strategy aimed at resolving two interlinked problems - access to affordable medicines (when patented drugs are too expensive e.g. newer antiretrovirals); and the lack of Research & Development for many diseases that affect the poor (no drugs or diagnostics for certain diseases, or not adapted for field settings e.g. tuberculosis drugs and diagnostics, pediatric AIDS diagnosis, interaction of antiretrovirals and anti-TB drugs, etc.).

Although the talks were suspended after six days, some progress was made, "What is most encouraging is that governments have decided that business as usual won't do anymore," said Michel Lotrowska, a Campaigner with MSF'S Access to Essential Medicines Campaign, "and governments are taking steps to address the fundamental reasons why investment into innovation for diseases of the poor is lacking. As a medical organisation, we need an R&D system that allows both medical innovation and access."

The talks will resume in April 2008. Until then, civil society organisations will have nearly four months to influence the positions of their Health Ministers.

To read more about the next steps of this process up until the next round of negotiations in April, please see the latest news at [www.ua2010.org](http://www.ua2010.org).

## Human Rights and HIV/AIDS



At the 2006 United Nations High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS, world leaders reaffirmed that "the full realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is an essential element in the global response to the HIV/AIDS

pandemic". Yet, 25 years into the AIDS epidemic, this essential element remains the missing piece in stopping the spread of AIDS. In response, 24 leading HIV and human rights organisations and networks throughout the world developed a declaration entitled "Human Rights and HIV/AIDS: Now More than Ever - 10 Reasons Why Human Rights Should Occupy the Center of the Global AIDS Struggle". Recognising that universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support will never be achieved unless countries take real action on HIV and

human rights, the World AIDS Campaign recently endorsed the declaration and calls upon other organisations to do the same.

The declaration is available in English, French, Russian, and Spanish at [http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/law/articles\\_publications/publications/human\\_20071017](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/law/articles_publications/publications/human_20071017). Please visit <http://www.soros.org/endorsehumanrights> to endorse the declaration or view the list of endorsements.

## Take the Lead- Facilitating a Strong and Connected Youth Movement

As part of their overall strategy to strengthen and facilitate a stronger and more connected youth movement, in January 2008, the World AIDS Campaign is facilitating a two-day youth consultation meeting in Amsterdam. During this consultation in January, participants will identify and analyse the youth constituencies current needs, strengths, and challenges, so that young people can be empowered to campaign and mobilise more effectively leading up to 2010.

Among the key goals of the consultation is the intention to set out a "roadmap" for the youth constituency to work together, aligning their messages and campaigning activities for young people. The consultation will also aim to coordinate and orchestrate more effective youth collaboration specifically around key events, such as World AIDS Day and UNGASS. And of course, the consultation will focus on highlighting the accountability of youth leadership to stop AIDS. Youth leaders from organisations that are taking significant steps in universal access will attend this meeting.



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